Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-26. (Canceled)

27. (New) A method for communicating between nodes in a network via a switched virtual circuit (SVC) wherein the SVC is not broken down between communication episodes, the method comprising:

establishing a connection between nodes by:

monitoring current bandwidth usage between a first and second node;

determining whether transmissions between the first and second nodes exceed a predetermined threshold;

responsive to the transmissions exceeding the predetermined threshold, establishing at least one SVC between the first and second nodes, wherein each end of the at least one SVC is connected to a first endpoint that is further connected to a first virtual termination (VT) present in the first node and a second endpoint that is further connected to a second VT in the second node; and

responsive to a request from an end user in the first node to connect to an end user in the second node, connecting said first end user to the first VT in the first node and connecting to the second end user via the previously established at least one SVC and the endpoint in the second node to the second VT in the second node; and

upon receiving a request to disconnect the first and second users, disconnecting the first end user from the first VT and the second end user from the second VT while maintaining the SVC between the first and second nodes even though the SVC is idle...

28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein a plurality of virtual terminations are available in each of the nodes.

29. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the SVC(s) remains connected as long as a predetermined number of circuits between the first and second nodes are active and bearing traffic.

30. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein monitoring current bandwidth usage includes monitoring all transmissions between the first and second nodes on all connections including permanent virtual circuits and the SVCs.

31. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the predetermined threshold value is associated with the first and second nodes.

32. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the predetermined threshold value is stored in a data table specifying a different threshold value, for each path or destination node.

33. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the step of allowing the SVC to stay connected between the first and second nodes further comprises utilizing call control half calls between the first endpoint and the first VT and between the second endpoint and the second VT.

34. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the first and second nodes are media gateways and a media gateway controller controls both first and second nodes.

35. (New) The method of claim 34, further comprising the media gateway controller monitoring the transmissions between the first and second nodes, comparing the monitored transmissions to the predetermined threshold and upon determining that the transmissions exceed the threshold, connecting the SVC between media gateways.

36. (New) A system for communicating between nodes in a network via a switched virtual circuit (SVC) wherein the SVC is not broken down between communication episodes, the system comprising:

at least two nodes, each node comprising means for establishing at least one virtual termination in the associated node wherein the virtual termination is utilized for connecting an end user to the SVC;

a controller for establishing a connection between nodes by

monitoring current bandwidth usage between a first and second node;

determining whether transmissions between the first and second nodes exceed a predetermined threshold;

establishing at least one SVC between the first and second nodes if the transmissions exceed the predetermined threshold, wherein each end of the SVC is connected to a first endpoint that is further connected to a first virtual termination (VT) present in the first node and a second endpoint that is further connected to a second VT in the second node;

responsive to a request from an end user in the first node to connect to an end user in the second node, connecting said first end user to the first VT in the first node and connecting the second end user to the second VT in the second node; and

for disconnecting the connection between the first and second node by receiving a request to disconnect the first and second end users;

disconnecting the first end user from the first VT and the second end user from the second VT while maintaining the SVC between the first and second nodes even though the SVC is idle.

37. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein a plurality of virtual terminations are available in each node.

38. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the SVC(s) remains connected as long as a predetermined number of circuits between the first and second nodes are active and bearing traffic.

39. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the controller further includes monitoring all transmissions between the first and second nodes on all connections including permanent virtual circuits and the SVC(s).

40. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the predetermined threshold value is associated with the first and second nodes.

41. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the predetermined threshold value is stored in a data table specifying a different threshold value, for each path or destination node and the data table is available to the controller.

42. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the controller maintains the SVC connection by utilizing call control half calls between the first endpoint and the first VT and between the second endpoint and the second VT.

43. (New) The system of claim 36, wherein the first and second nodes are media gateways and both gateways are controlled by a media gateway controller.

44. (New) The system of claim 43, wherein the media gateway controller monitors the transmissions between the first and second nodes, compares the measured transmissions to the predetermined threshold and upon determining that the transmissions exceed the threshold, connects the SVC between the media gateways.